

I would like to discuss legal obligations. What are employer federal legal obligations?

The Canadian Human Rights Act supersedes all legislation and extends the laws of Canada within the federal sphere in programs, services, and contracts. They are responsible to uphold the principle that all individuals should have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have, and to have their needs accommodated without being hindered or prevented from doing so by discrimination based on their perceived disability.

As an employer, you are required to ensure that all people affected by your organization are treated equally regardless of their race, gender, disability, or any of the other grounds of discrimination listed in the Canadian Human Rights Act. Employers are obligated to duty, to accommodate persons with disabilities including Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals for communication access in the workplace, as well as taking any appropriate action against any employee who harasses someone. An employer can be held responsible for harassment committed by their employees.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a bill entrenched in the Canadian constitution that protects the political and civil rights of all Canadians and supersedes all provincial and federal human rights legislations. The Charter is explicit in its provision for sign language interpreting services during any proceedings in which Deaf Canadians are involved, as noted in Section 14, the Supreme Court of Canada's Eldridge decision, and the Federal Court of Canada's Canadian Association of the Deaf decision are both examples in section 15.1 in the charter.

Accessible Canada Act is currently in process and expected to pass in the House of Commons in spring of 2019. The Accessible Canada Act proactively eliminates barriers and ensures greater opportunities for Canadians with disabilities. Accessible Canada Act has six standards which include Service Canada's service delivery, built environment, employment, information and communication technologies, transportation and procurement, which are third party contracts for provision of services and products sales.